
SUBJECT:	<i>Chiltern Pools Open Space Update</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>Cllr Liz Walsh Healthy Communities Portfolio Holder</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Martin Holt – Head of Healthy Communities</i>
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WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>All CDC</i>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise members on the consultation to dispose of the Public Open Space at Woodside Close and land off Chiltern Avenue to Amersham Town Council in return for an area of King George V Playing Fields to facilitate the development of the Chiltern Life Centre .
- 1.2 The report also advises on the proposed public consultation in relation to the design of the proposed Chiltern Life Centre

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members advise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Leader of the Council on the decision to acquire the area of land marked in Appendix 1 and dispose of the land referred to in Appendix 2 to Amersham Town Council in support of the redevelopment of the Chiltern Pools, library, Drake Hall, and Youth club in Amersham
2. To provide public information on the redesigned centre ahead of any decision to proceed with a planning application

2. Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 To enable the land assembly to facilitate the development of the Chiltern Life Centre as a replacement to the current Chiltern Pools, Drake Hall, Nursery/Youth Club and Library buildings.

3. Content of Report

Public Open Space Land Swap

- 3.1 The Council undertook public consultation in January 2017 to assess the level of public support to develop a new replacement facility for Chiltern Pools. The consultation revealed overwhelming support but identified a range of issues of concern; including levels of parking, disruption to existing site users during construction and proximity of residential properties new building plans. To mitigate these concerns, new plans were developed, siting the new centre along King George V Avenue on the existing library site extending to where the play area, outside exercise zone and skate area are located (Appendix 3).

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- 3.2 On 27 June 2017, Cabinet approved the progression of the Chiltern Pools redevelopment project, and agreed to undertake public consultation together with Amersham Town Council in relation to the proposed disposal of land at Woodside Close to the Town Council and the acquisition of part of King George V Playing Fields from the Town Council in exchange to support the redevelopment of the facility.
- 3.3 A total of 507 on-line replies were received of which a sizeable majority were from the Amersham area due to the targeted publicity. There was positive support expressed in relation to the Council entering in to a land swap with the Town Council to facilitate the development of the Chiltern Life Centre with 70% of respondents supporting the proposals.
- 3.4 The Fields in Trust agreed with Amersham Town Council to release the current protection on the area of land marked in Appendix 1 enabling the possible development of the Chiltern Life Centre.
- 3.5 The Fields in Trust however conditioned that the land detailed in Appendix 2 should be transferred to the ownership of Amersham Town Council and be the subject of Fields in Trust protection. That protection would keep the land as open space in perpetuity.
- 3.6 In preparation for this circumstance Cabinet agreed on 27 June 2017 to place the necessary statutory advertisements and undertake public consultation together with Amersham Town Council in relation to the proposed disposal and acquisition of land as detailed to support the redevelopment of the facility.
- 3.7 Cabinet further agreed 27th June 2017 to delegate the consideration of any duly made objections during the advertisement period; and that the decision whether to acquire and dispose of the land referred to above and the detailed terms thereof to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Leader of the Council.
- 3.8 Both Councils undertook the statutory advertisements and public consultation required together with a joint press release and information on both the Town and District Councils websites for a period of 20 days from Monday 26th March 2018.
- 3.9 At the time of writing this report the Chiltern District Council has not received any objections to the statutory advertisements and public consultation. However a letter from a local resident was sent to the Bucks Examiner and copied to the Council. This letter does not object to the development but raises concerns over the loss of overall green space in Amersham.
- 3.10 The protection being offered through this process would increase the amount of Open Space protected from future development via the Fields in Trust whilst enabling significant investment in to the community for the benefit of all Chiltern residents.
- 3.11 A verbal update will be presented to Members at the Services Committee and Cabinet following the closure of the statutory consultation.

Pre-Planning Consultation

3.12 The current design has been developed to RIBA stage 2 taking in to account the previous consultation responses and the requirements of the various stakeholders and users of the centre.

3.13 To inform the future planning application in relation to the proposed Chiltern Life Centre it is proposed to present the current design for public information

4. Options

4.1 To agree to the land swap to facilitate the development of the Chiltern Life Centre, a replacement to the current Chiltern Pools, Drake Hall, Nursery/Youth Club and Library buildings.

4.2 To inform the public of the current design prior to any planning application.

5. Corporate Implications

5.1 Financial – As there will be nominal value of the acquisition of the land off King George V Avenue we will be seeking information on the stamp duty land tax payable.

5.2 Legal – The Council has a duty to consider the health and wellbeing of its community, enabling leisure opportunities to support a healthier and active community would assist the Council in supporting this objective.

6 Links to Council Policy Objectives

6.1 Delivering cost-effective, customer focussed services.

6.2 Working towards safe and healthier local communities.

7 Next Step

7.1. To undertake the land transaction with Amersham Town Council and to undertake further public information sessions on the development ahead of any decision to submit a planning application

Background Papers:	None
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